



FEMA

**NEWS RELEASE
STATE/FEDERAL DISASTER FIELD OFFICE
JOINT INFORMATION CENTER**



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WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN INSPECTORS VISIT

EVERETT, WA – Individuals who have applied for state and federal disaster assistance may be contacted and visited by a damage inspector to verify losses, according to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Federal Coordinating Officer, Anthony Russell.

"The inspections help us determine the amount of damages experienced by applicants and their eligibility, which allows us to assist them in the quickest and most efficient way possible," said Russell. "Applicants can expect one or more different inspectors to visit and assess their damaged property. FEMA inspectors typically schedule appointments in less than 7 days following an application."

The U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) sends Loss Verifiers to inspect the damaged property of those who have submitted completed loan applications. SBA Loss Verifiers will make an appointment as soon as a completed application is received, regardless of insurance settlement.

After calling FEMA's toll-free registration line -- **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 1-800-462-7585** - - applicants will receive a letter from FEMA explaining the process of applying for disaster aid.

Applicants will be asked to verify that they own or occupy the damaged property, and that it is their primary residence. State and federal officials stress that under no circumstances will inspectors request money or any form of payment for their work.

"We are advising applicants to ask for identification from anyone claiming to be a damage inspector," said Diane R. Offord, state coordinating officer. "All inspectors and verifiers carry official photo identification. If an inspector is not wearing identification, ask to see it."

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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Note to Editors: Disaster information is available on FEMA's World Wide Web at <http://www.fema.gov> or the Washington Emergency Management Division at <http://emd.wa.gov>.